

AMIGA SHOPPER

Greetings, fellow Amiga enthusiasts, and welcome to the Amiga Shopper Subscribers' newsletter.

Dear Subscriber,

Now you've had plenty of time to read your new-look March issue of Amiga Shopper from cover to cover, we would welcome any comments you may have about it – such as what you think of the two Coverdisks, the mix of features and reviews in the issue and what you would like to see covered in future issues of Amiga Shopper. You know what you want from your Amiga magazine and we want you to tell us!

On to this month. Inside the magazine we have: a feature all about the 3D graphics and video specialists, Premier Vision; another enormous supertest, this time our chosen subject is modems; and we also have the first in a series of Photogenics tutorials (if you want to have a look at this great image processing package, then get hold of Amiga Format issue 69 which has a demo of Photogenics on the Coverdisk). That's enough about them – back to Amiga Shopper; we also have lots of reviews, a Comms tutorial all about FidoNet and Tim Tucker talks about making music on your Amiga. And that's only half of the magazine; there's also a six-page Public Domain section and, of course, Amiga Answers, plus loads more.

And, as ever, you have your special "exclusive-to-subscribers" disk which contains three excellent programs: APlayer, BluffTitler and SuperDuper – see overleaf for more details.



Sue Grant,
Editor.



Sue Grant is the new Editor of Amiga Shopper. She has worked in publishing for over 12 years and has been at Future Publishing for two years, firstly as Production Editor of Super Play and then as Deputy Editor of Amiga Format.

Subscriptionsdisk

Yes, even with two Coverdisks, you still get your exclusive Subscribers' disk. Graeme Sandiford shows you how to use its contents.

We have another juicy Subscribers' disk for you this month. As usual, I've scoured the Internet looking for new and exciting programs, but this time the best programs that I've found are a tad on the large size. So,

rather than going for quantity, I've gone for quality and put three top-notch programs on this month's disk.

However, please remember that the disk is not bootable – you would be surprised at the number of letters I get each month. Also if a disk icon doesn't appear, try scrolling down your Workbench window.

APlayer

APlayer is one of the most feature-laden module players I have seen in some time. The A stands for Accessible and indeed that is what it

is. It has a number of features that make playing your favourite modules as easy and convenient as possible. Please note that you will need Workbench 2 or greater to run this program.

To run APlayer, first double-click on the unpack_APlayer icon, to de-archive the Lha file to RAM. Next, copy the extracted files to disk and run the installation script. As it uses Commodore's Installer, it is quite a straightforward process – just follow the on-screen prompts.

Right, now you've got it up and running, what's so special about APlayer? Well, first of all, it can load and play an inordinate number of different module formats. There is a huge list of supported formats in the documentation and I don't even recognise half of them.

However a more unusual feature is the program's ARexx support. You can access most of the program's features through a few simple commands. You can also control APlayer via the keyboard, so you don't have to waste time clicking on buttons. It's all very intuitive; for example, pressing the left and right arrow keys will rewind or forward a module.

The principles behind the way that APlayer works are very simple – indeed, it works in similar fashion to a CD player. But, instead of loading tracks from a CD, it loads in modules which are then manipulated in much the same way as CD tracks would be. For instance, you can program APlayer to play the modules you have loaded in a specific order or randomly. Unlike most CD players, you can also save a list of your favourite modules.

APlayer can also play modules that have been packed with programs such as PowerPacker. Not

only this, it can also de-archive Lha files automatically. However, it will only play the modules that are on the archive's root directory.

APlayer can be used as a sample-ripper too. It can save samples from modules so that you can use these in your own compositions. However, you can also play them back straight from your keyboard as the module is being played. Well, there are plenty of other excellent features, but I won't rave on any more as there isn't enough space. If you want to find out more, read the guide document that has been supplied.

BluffTitrer demo

This is a demonstration version of an intriguing program. BluffTitrer can be used to animate 3D text. As it is only a demonstration version, you won't be able to save your animations. BluffTitrer requires at least Workbench 2, a 68020, or faster, processor and will benefit greatly from some Fast RAM and an AGA chipset.

The program is quite simple to use as it works on a key-frame system. What this means is that to create an animation all you need is an end and start frame – the computer will work out all the frames in between. For example, if you wanted to rotate some text by 180 degrees, you would simply change the appropriate value in the next frame. Then, the computer will work out the changes that will need to be made for the text to get from start to finish, doing so on a step-by-step basis.

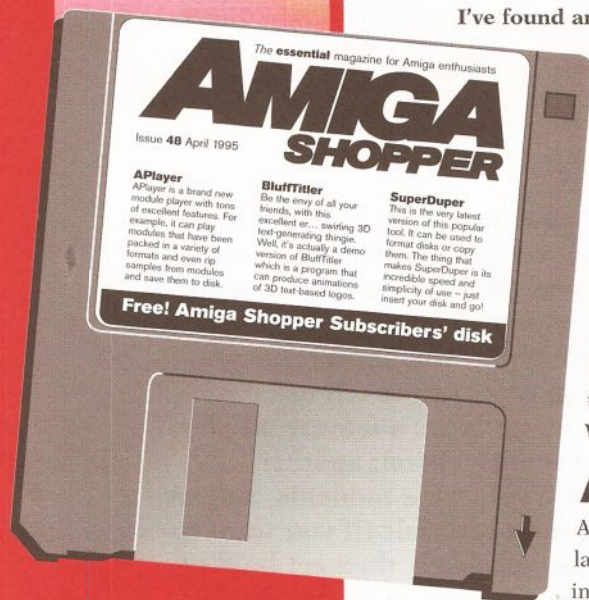
That's quite a simple example that needs two key-frames, a start and a finish. To create more complicated motions, you'll need more frames. This is quite easy to do – you simply make the changes you want and then press the insert button. This will insert a key-frame with the positional and rotational information you've set.

As well as being able to change the text's position and rotation, you can also change the way it and its background appear. You can edit the palette by hand, or choose from several ready-made ones. You can also alter the shape and proportions of the text by making it thicker, or making it more slanted and so on.

After a few adjustments, you'll have the option to view a preview or generate an animation. To make a preview, just press the preview button, to view the animation in colour, then press start, but make sure you are at the first frame so you can see the whole animation.

SuperDuper 3.13

Despite its flashy name, SuperDuper performs a relatively simple task – it copies and formats disks. However, there is a reason for it being called Super, and that's because of its incredible speed – it can copy a disk in as little as 38 seconds... phew! It also has ARexx support and disk buffering. ■



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